

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

June 2, 2009

The Honorable Meera Shankar  
Ambassador to the United States  
Embassy of India  
2107 Massachusetts Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20008

Dear Ambassador Shankar:


We hope this letter finds you well. We look forward to working with you as the representative of a multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-lingual society that share the democratic values of the United States.

The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) is seeking to travel to India from June 14 through June 28 to gather first-hand information on the conditions of religious freedom and related human rights. USCIRF is an independent, bipartisan U.S. Government commission that provides valuable policy recommendations to the President, Congress and Secretary of State. So, we were surprised to learn that the Commission was recently denied visas for its proposed trip in June.

Given the deepening relationship between India and the United States, we hope that the Indian Government will reconsider allowing a USCIRF visit to proceed in June so that the Commission will have the benefit of meeting with Indian officials, NGOs, and other relevant actors as it prepares its final report and recommendations on India.

We appreciate any assistance you can offer to help facilitate USCIRF's request for travel.

Sincerely,



Jim McDermott  
Member of Congress



Ed Royce  
Member of Congress